

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-23 are pending in this application. Claim 2 has been canceled. Claims 1 and 3-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), and new claims 22 and 23 have been added herein.

During the February 26, 2004 interview, attorney for the Applicants explained the reasons for Applicants' belief that all of the original claims are allowable. As the Examiner acknowledged in the Office Action of November 4, 2003, the cited prior art does not specifically teach a plurality of network segments provided by a plurality of separate network transport suppliers, as claimed. However, as the Examiner suggested during the interview, the Applicants have amended original independent claims 1, 13, and 19 to clarify this aspect of the claimed invention. The Applicants also have canceled original dependent claim 2 and amended original dependent claims 3-5, 9, and 10, to make those claims consistent with independent claim 1, as amended. In addition, the Applicants have added two new independent claims that further clarify this aspect of the invention. In light of these amendments and the newly added claims, the Applicants respectfully submit that the application is now in condition for allowance.

In the Claims**Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103**

Pending claims 1 and 3-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Farris *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,881,131). As the Examiner has acknowledged, however, Farris *et al.* does not teach a plurality of network segments

The present invention relates to methods and systems for provisioning and obtaining customized telecommunication circuits. Original claims 1 and 2-12, as well as new claims 22 and 23, are directed to methods of provisioning a customized circuit between at least two terminal points. Original claims 13-18 are directed to methods of obtaining a provisioned circuit between at least two terminal points. Original claims 19-21 are directed to systems for provisioning a circuit between at least two terminal points. Each of these claims requires that the customized circuit include at least two network segments provided by at least two separate network transport suppliers. Farris *et al.* does not show, describe, or suggest this feature of the claimed invention.

For instance, original independent claim 1, as amended, recites "obtaining a plurality of network parameter information related to said plurality of network segments provided by said plurality of separate network transport suppliers," "identifying a subset of said plurality of network segments based on said evaluation of said plurality of network parameter information, wherein said subset of said plurality of network segments may be linked to form a provisioned circuit between said at least two terminal points in response to said customer request, and wherein said subset of said plurality of network segments is provided by at least two of said plurality of separate network transport suppliers," and "linking said subset of said plurality of network segments to form said provisioned circuit between said at least two terminal points." Farris *et al.* does not show, describe, or suggest these features of claim 1. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) with respect to independent claim 1 and dependent claims 3-12.

Similarly, original independent claim 13, as amended, recites "receiving at least one circuit option from said facilitator in response to said request, wherein each of said at least one circuit options comprises at least two of said plurality of network segments provided by at least two of said plurality of separate network transport suppliers," and "selecting one of said at least one circuit options for provisioning into a provisioned circuit." Farris *et al.* does not show, describe, or suggest these features of claim 13. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) with respect to independent claim 13 and dependent claims 13-18.

Original independent claim 19, as amended, recites "a database resident on said at least one processing server and including a plurality of network parameter information related to said plurality of network segments provided by said plurality of separate network transport suppliers, wherein the database is updated on regular basis with a plurality of update information received from said plurality of transport suppliers," and "logic software resident on said at least one server and in communication with the database, and programmed to evaluate said plurality of network parameter information in connection with a plurality of network parameters relating to said customer request, and to identify a subset of said plurality of network segments based on said evaluation of said plurality of network parameter information, wherein said subset of said plurality of network segments may be linked to form a provisioned circuit between said at least two terminal points in accordance with the customer request, and wherein said subset of said plurality of network segments is provided by at least two of said plurality of separate network transport suppliers." Farris *et al.* does not show, describe, or suggest

these features of claim 19. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw this rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) with respect to independent claim 19 and dependent claims 20-21.

Newly added claims 22 and 23 also require that the customized circuit include at least two network segments provided by at least two separate network transport suppliers. For instance, new independent claim 22 recites "identifying a plurality of available circuit options, each including two or more of said plurality of network segments provided by said plurality of separate network transport suppliers," "receiving a customer circuit selection of one of said plurality of available circuit options, wherein said selected circuit option includes a subset of said plurality of network segments provided by at least two of said plurality of separate network transport suppliers," "ordering access to said subset of said plurality of network segments from a subset of at least two of said plurality of separate network transport suppliers," and "linking said subset of said plurality of network segments provided by said subset of said plurality of separate network transport suppliers to form a provisioned circuit between said at least two terminal points." Farris *et al.* does not show, describe, or suggest these features of claim 22. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner allow new claim 22.

Similarly, independent claim 23 recites "obtaining a first plurality of network parameter information related to a first subset of said plurality of network segments provided by a first of said plurality of separate network transport suppliers," "obtaining a second plurality of network parameter information related to a second subset of said plurality of network segments provided by a second of said plurality of separate network

transport suppliers," "evaluating said first and second pluralities of network parameter information in connection with a plurality of network parameters relating to said customer request," "identifying a third subset of said plurality of network segments, including at least one network segment from each of said first and second subsets of said plurality of network segments, wherein said third subset of said plurality of network segments may be linked to form a provisioned circuit between said at least two terminal points in response to said customer request," and "linking said third subset of said plurality of network segments to form said provisioned circuit between said at least two terminal points." Farris *et al.* does not show, describe, or suggest these features of claim 23. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner allow new claim 23.

SUMMARY

Pending claims 1 and 3-23, as amended and added, are allowable. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner grant early allowance of these claims. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorneys for the Applicants via telephone if such communication would expedite this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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